

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-32 (canceled)

Claim 33 (currently amended): A method for treating monolithic bone intended for implantation to conserve the mechanical strength of the bone during lyophilization and subsequent packaging and maintain such strength during the storage of the bone, the method comprising:

- a) contacting the bone with a mechanical strength-conserving amount of at least one biocompatible mechanical strength-conserving agent, said agent being a liquid organic material which is capable of penetrating and remaining in the bone during its lyophilization, packaging and storage, wherein said agent is not glucose;
- b) lyophilizing the bone containing the mechanical strength-conserving agent; and,
- c) packaging the lyophilized bone.

Claim 34 (currently amended): A lyophilized monolithic bone implant containing at least one biocompatible mechanical strength-conserving agent, said agent being a liquid organic material which is capable of penetrating and remaining in the bone during its lyophilization, packaging and storage, wherein said agent is not glucose.